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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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### JAPAN, SIBERIA, AND GERMAN PROPAGANDA

SIR,—Here and in New York people ask me what I think of the Japanese invasion of Siberia, and I say I don't think because they have not invaded Siberia.

"Oh, yes, they have. I have seen it in the papers," is all the proof then can produce.

German propaganda is plainly visible in all this agitation and misinformation; but it is strange that intelligent people can be fooled by German interests at this late day, and that they will continue to aid the German propagandists—literally work for the Kaiser—by repeating such stuff and making remarks derogatory to any of the Allies. To turn the Allies against one another is all that German heart could wish.

Bernhardi, Zimmerman, and Count Rex, the German Ambassador who left Tokyo in 1914, have all said that they would embroil America and Japan, since that would be most helpful to Germany, would distract us from affairs in the Atlantic and Europe, and give Germany a freer hand in Europe and Asia. Germany saw the defeat of Russia in 1905, and the rise of Japan as a formidable military Power in the Far East with rage and chagrin. Japan is a great obstacle to Germany in Asia both politically and economically. Only Japan can meet and best Germany in trade rivalry in China. Only Japan can keep Germany out of the Pacific, now that Japan has once put her out of that hemisphere, for we are not nearly awake to the menace and do not realize how imminent it is.

Only Japan has patrolled and kept the Pacific free from raiders and submarines, and made it safe for our commerce and our travelers since the war began. Our only contribution has been to permit San Francisco, Honolulu and Manila to be safe headquarters for German spies and Hindu conspirators to plot and intrigue against Japan, England and India. The German consul at Honolulu and the German naval officers, whose ships were interned there, put the wildest rumors upon the wireless service and our yellow press obediently went off into headlines reporting Japanese naval bases and wireless masts and armies all over Lower California and Mexico.

These intelligent talkers tell me, also, that the Japanese have not done anything in this war except take Kiao-chau for their own profit. Of course any talk about Japan sending an army to Europe is the rankest nonsense. There have never been one hundred ships to spare to take the 100,000 Japanese soldiers on a six or eight weeks' journey, were the Suez route open and safe, nor ships to keep them supplied with their own

food. They have long ago lost the best and largest of their ships on the European routes by mines and torpedoes, and the arrival of the raider *Wolf* at Kiel so lately has cleared up the mystery of the *Hitachi-maru*, which left Cape Town last September and was never heard of until its crew and passengers were brought to Kiel. Japan's whole navy has been in commission and hard at work since August, 1914, patrolling the Pacific, capturing, driving to internment, and sinking German vessels, seizing German cable stations and islands, conveying the Australian troop ships to Suez, protecting Indian cities, landing marines at the critical moment of the uprising at Singapore and saving that British community from extermination, chasing submarines in the Mediterranean and off the mouth of the Gironde, and conveying British ships in the Mediterranean. The first thing I saw off the Gironde and all the way up the river to Bordeaux were Japanese torpedo boats and destroyers. Three crews of ships sunk in the Mediterranean I saw at Cook's office in Paris last summer, and all had been rescued by Japanese patrol boats and destroyers. Three passengers returning on the same ship with me last Fall had also been torpedoed in the Mediterranean, and had also been rescued by Japanese destroyers.

The Japanese Red Cross conducted a model hospital in Russia, and also one in England and in France for the first year of the war—sending to Belgium and Serbia an equivalent in hospital supplies as preferably requested. The Red Cross and individual Japanese have given liberally for European relief, and have been unceasing in their gifts to the Russian and Polish refugees, who by many thousands were shipped to Siberia and dumped in concentration camps, where they suffered the lack of everything quite as much as the prisoners of war in Siberia.

Japanese people in addition raised by voluntary contributions a sum just short of two million *yen* for the comfort of the Ally wounded; and Italy's share, some \$300,000, opportunely reached the Italian Red Cross just at the moment of the reverses of last autumn.

Each battalion that went from Western Canada included fifty Japanese volunteers in 1914 and 1915, and three of these Japanese in British Columbia regiments won the Victoria Cross and many others lesser medals and mention in 1916.

At the request of the Russian Government, Japanese artillery officers conducted a school of gunnery at Petrograd for two and a half years. These Japanese officers were asked by General Brusiloff to take charge of his artillery in his last great offensive, and you doubtless remember that the artillery fire was the great feature of his advance, which swept everything before Brusiloff's army until the Petrograd War Office cut off and diverted his ammunition supplies and so brought the campaign to an end.

Japan was the first of the Allies to permanently capture a fortress and force a German army to surrender. She did her job neatly and promptly, without any fussing or bragging, and so methodically as to have the feat called "autumn manoeuvres." Japan was never blind to the danger of a German foothold in China, and the great railway concession which Germany had secured to build a railway straight across from Kiao-chau to Central Asia, was plain warning of her intentions, of what Japan might expect in ten or twenty or forty years. By the capture of

Kiao-chau that plan was nipped in the bud; but if Germany is to steal in at Vladivostok with an already completed railway to Europe as well as to Central Asia, the work must be done over again. Having once put Germany out of the Pacific, Japan does not intend to let her return to those waters, nor does England nor France, who have colonies and interests there.

Do we, with our avowed intention of sometime withdrawing from the Philippines, mean to let Germany come back to the Pacific—when we know that Germany is the only Power that wanted and wants the Philippines, and vowed that we should never have them, and showed her hand and her mind so plainly to Admiral Dewey at Manila in 1898?

England could have foreclosed her mortgage on Manila at any time in the last century had she wanted the Philippines; and Japan refused to buy them, when offered for less than a third of what we paid in hard cash through the Treaty of Paris—plus all the expenses of our conquest and military occupation. Neither England nor Japan, if they had once acquired the Philippines and Guam, would have supinely allowed Germany to come in and boldly buy all the rest of the island group entirely surrounding Guam, as we did—in all innocence—in spite of the revelations of the German mind at Manila.

The freight and dunnage lying around on wharves and open ground at Vladivostok are not the chief concern of Japan, although ammunition and submarines in parts would be very dangerous things in clever German hands. A few raiders let out into the Pacific would inaugurate a reign of terror in all the East. The accumulated freight at Vladivostok is mostly of American origin, as England took over from Japan the manufacturing of ammunition for Russia in early 1916. England had the plant and could do so, and since she had to pay all of Russia's bills anyhow, it was cheaper. Japan did not receive cash payments from Russia for anything she did supply in the first year of the war. It was too literally "Let George pay." When Japan balked, after a year of furnishing pay for raw materials and labor on credit, the strip of railway zone from Changchun to the Sungari river and navigation rights on that stream were assigned. After that, England paid. Once England gave treasury notes for fifty millions and again for seventy millions, and Japan floated a domestic loan. At the same time, Japanese financiers lent fifty millions to France.

In the United States, no credit was allowed on Russian orders. Every nail and horseshoe and locomotive and bit of barbed wire had to be paid for at the factory door, and it was up to the Russian agents to get things to Seattle and thence by a fleet of Norwegian, Swedish and Japanese steamers over to Vladivostok. To provide for these cash payments to American manufacturers, Russia sent \$200,000,000 in gold bullion and \$100,000,000 in platinum to Vladivostok in 1915, and Japan sent three of her fastest cruisers to transport it across to Vancouver and deliver it to the Bank of England agent at Vancouver. Three times these Japanese cruisers carried the precious metals over to pay the American bills—and Japan and England still wait for their money.

Nothing could be more amusing than the common idea here that Siberia is a sort of a promised land, a garden of Eden into which the Japanese are dying to enter and grow rice, silk and tea; and that if they once got

in there, they would never leave the charming place—that they might occupy and annex the whole of Siberia, and spill over into Europe and appear on the borders of Germany. A veritable Yellow Peril! So precisely the picture that the Kaiser once drew, that it might suggest its origin to any intelligent person not hypnotized by German propagandists. They look doubtful when one suggests that an army of even 300,000 Japanese would not go far in a country 4,000 miles across, with railway towns 100 and 500 miles apart, and Japanese food and supplies to follow by assured railway communications! And they doubt, too, when one assures them that Japanese interests are not imperilled at Irkutsk, that they are concerned only with the seacoast and harbors fronting their islands.

“But don’t the Japanese want to, and need to expand, to emigrate?” they ask.

Certainly they do, but not to any such uncivilized, undeveloped and inhospitable region as Siberia. The Japanese working-classes do not emigrate to Manchuria or Korea because of the severe climate, nor to Formosa, because of the tropic heat. They go to those countries as employers of inferior people as laborers. They go as engineers, surveyors, builders, contractors, foremen, petty merchants, photographers, barbers, etc., and temporarily only.

The Japanese very much wish to go to highly civilized countries where they can work, study, learn, and earn high wages, and bring back and send back money to their families. Our treaty with Japan secures them that right, but as one State has seen fit to legislate and agitate against the faithful observance of our treaty, and the Federal Government has no power to enforce it, to make the State observe the nation’s word of honor, the Japanese forego the privileges, so definitely guaranteed by free men in a free country, where *all* men are free and equal. They have voluntarily agreed to keep their workmen at home by the strictest observance of their Gentlemen’s Agreement. The Japanese observe it strictly. I mean, no Japanese ever dreams of or attempts to evade it. The prohibition is law and absolute. Hardly a week passes but some American applies to an American Consulate or to the American Embassy in Japan for the privilege of taking a Japanese butler or valet or maid to America. Nothing can convince such Americans that there is not some loophole, some inside track, some “pull” that can get around the agreement in their particular case. When the fact is finally driven into their heads that the thing cannot be done, every one of them turns in and berates the Japanese Government—for keeping its word!

And now that the Japanese have landed marines at Vladivostok, what will not the German propagandists and their dupes say? They want “guarantees that the Japanese will ever get out of Siberia.” Who asked us for guarantees when we went into Cuba, and Haiti, and San Domingo, and Nicaragua, and Mexico? Whose business is it but Japan’s there, anyhow?

It angers me when anyone speaks disparagingly of the British, the French or the Italians, or criticizes them or impugns their motives in the way German propagandists want us to do. They are our Allies now and we stand together loyally, or we all go down.

A Californian has lately said that only the British navy has saved us

and our precious old Monroe Doctrine so far—and now, if the Germans get to Vladivostok and control the Siberian Bolsheviki as easily as they do the Finnish and others, only the Japanese navy can save California from becoming a second Belgium. And of course Japan will risk every last man, ship and gun to save California!

Nothing is so plain, straight and clear as that the German propagandists are behind all this opposition to Japan protecting her people and her interests in the Siberian coast province and preventing Germany from getting a foothold in the Pacific again.

Are we going to help them, or just hinder and insult an Ally?

E. R. S.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

### WASTING TIME OVER PRINCIPLES

SIR,—The March copy of THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW and the following letter were laid on my desk at the same time. The presence of the REVIEW suggested my giving you a copy of the letter, which is self-explanatory.

With reference to the letter, it has occurred to me that a man who occupies the place that you occupy among American readers might be able to do a little something towards instilling common sense in the labor department of the present Administration.

The writer is in charge of the manufacture and production of lumber at a Rock Creek plant, and at the present time he is engaged chiefly in getting out considerable quantity of material for use of the ship yards. The action of the Government in establishing what they call basic principles of the eight-hour day among the West Coast mills will undoubtedly foreshadow a like action for the mills in the South. My chief point is this: Does the Government want ships, or do they want to waste their time establishing basic principles that are from one to two years old? At least, the writer never heard of a basic principle of an eight-hour day prior to the advent of the present Administration. The establishment of an eight-hour day on the Coast is nothing more or less than a submission to the demands of the I. W. W.'s, and will entail a decided curtailment in the production of ship stock. If this principle is carried out among the Southern mills, it will entail another decrease in the production of ship stock.

I would appreciate some light on just what the Government does want. This much we do know, that it is impossible to manufacture as much lumber in eight hours as it is in ten hours with or without basic principles. If ship stock is what the Government wants, why not leave the mills alone, or if any interference is to take place, let it be of some beneficial character, instead of an order which really curtails production. Either we are running a tremendous bluff that we are at war and that the war is going to be won on basic eight-hour principles, or we are playing rotten politics.

The writer would appreciate a letter from you giving your opinion as to just what you think of the basic principle of an eight-hour day, and its relation to the lumber industry.

Incidentally, there has been a great deal of comment in the papers